

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DRC-01 CU-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 716

INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 9528

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PL, VT

SUBJECT: OLSZOWSKI VISIT TO VATICAN

REF: WARSAW 4623

1. POLISH DESK OFFICER AT VATICAN INFORMED US SEPT. 12 THAT OLSZOWSKI VISIT NOW DEFINITELY EXPECTED IN EARLY NOVEMBER AND, ALTHOUGH DATE NOT YET SET, IT HAS BEEN AGREED IN PRINCIPLE THAT HE WILL HAVE PRIVATE AUDIENCE WITH POPE PAUL. INITIAL AGREEMENT FOR VISIT WAS TAKEN DURING CAIAROLI-OLSZOWSKI MEETING IN HELSINKI LAST JULY. SOURCE INSISTED THAT POLISH EPISCOPATE HAD NO OBJECTIONS TO POPE RECEIVING OLSZOWSKI.

2. SOURCE UNDERSTAND THAT CONTROVERSIAL EDUCATIONAL REFORM BILL SHOULD BE VOTED IN SEYM IN OCTOBER. WHEN ASKED WHAT WAS HIS PROGNOSIS FOR BILL'S PASSAGE, HE REPLIED THAT, IN SPITE OF OBVIOUS OPPOSITION BY RANK AND FILE POLES, MOST OF WHOM PRACTISING CATHOLICS, THERE WAS A SLIGHTLY BETTER THAN EVEN CHANCE OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM BEING APPROVED. POLISH GOVERNMENT, HE SAID, IS UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE FROM SOVIET UNION AND EVEN CXECOSLOVAKIA TO FOLLOW THEIR EXAMPLE AND ESTABLISH MORE MARXIST EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. THIS PRESSURE FROM NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, IN SOURCE'S VIEW, WOULD PROBABLY OVERCOME EQUALLY HEAVY PRESSURES OF POLISH EPISCOPATE AND POPULATION. AHTOUGH IT IS ONLY A HYPOTHESIS, CONFIDENTIAL

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SOURCE VENTURED VIEW THAT, AFTER GETTING OFF HOOK WITH SOVIETS BY APPROVING EDUCATIONAL REFORM PROGRAM, GOP WOULD ONLY MAKE TOKEN EFFORTS AT EMPLEMENTING IT. SINCE EDUCATIONAL REFORM SEEMS IN PART DESIGNED TO KEEP CHILDREN AWAY FROM HOME FOR LONG PERIODS EACH DAY, SOURCE NOTED THAT, IN ADDITIONAL TO RELIGIOUS OBJECTIONS, MOST POLES WOULD PROBABLY OPPOSE IT ON PURELY PRACTICAL GROUNDS OF FAMILY UNITY AND IN RURAL AREAS BECAUSE IT WOULD SERIOUSLY HAMPER CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN FARM LABOR. HE ALSO DOUBTED THAT POLISH ECONOMY COULD TOLERATE LUXURY OF BUILDING GREAT NUMBER OF NEW SCHOOLS REQUIRED, BUYING BUSES, PROVIDING LUNCHES, ETC. VOLPE

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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